

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 06491 170857Z

15
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SUBJECT: GDR COMMEMORATION OF THE BERLIN WALL

1. WITH WREATH-LAYING CEREMONIES AND A PARADE OF
PARAMILITARY UNITS (KAMPFGRUPPEN) IN EAST BERLIN, THE
GDR OBSERVED THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SECURING OF
THE STATE BORDERS OF THE GDR, GDR TERMINOLOGY FOR THE
BERLIN WALL AND ITS BORDER WITH THE FRG, ON AUGUST 13.
THIS YEAR'S DEMONSTRATIONS FOLLOWED MUCH THE SAME PLAN
AS THOSE OF 1966 AND 1971, THE FIFTH AND TENTH ANNIVER-
SARIES OF THE WALL. IN ADDITION TO AUGUST 13 CELEBRATIONS
IN EAST BERLIN ORGANIZED BY THE SED BERLIN DISTRICT LEADER-
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PAGE 02 BERLIN 06491 170857Z

SHIP, THE GDR HELD A "SPARTAKIADE" ON AUGUST 14, IN

HONOR OF THE ANNIVERSARY, AN EVENT COMBINING SPORTS AND PARAMILITARY EXERCISES, INCLUDING SMALL-SCALE SIMULATED MANEUVERS, GRENADE THROWING AND ARTILLERY EXERCISE, INTENDED TO BRING CITIZENS AND ESPECIALLY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN CONTACT WITH THE MILITARY.

2. GDR AUGUST 13 OVERVANCES PAID HOMMAGE TO GDR BORDER GUARDS KILLED ON DUTY SINCE 1949 AND ATTEMPTED TO PORTRAY THE WALL AS ENJOYING THE SUPPORT OF GDR CITIZENS, HENCE THE SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THE FACT THAT PARAMILITARY UNITS, NOT THE GDR PEOPLE'S ARMY, WERE CALLED INTO ACTION ON AUGUST 13, 1961. GDR TELEVISION AND SED PARTY ORGAN NEUES DEUTSCHLAND CARRIED PICTURES OF EACH OF THE 18 GDR BORDER GUARDS KILLED SINCE 1949, DESCRIBING HOW EACH HAD BEEN "TREACHEROUSLY" KILLED ON THE BORDER, BUT NEVER MENTIONING THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THEM HAD BEEN KILLED BY GDR CITIZENS ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE. ON AUGUST 13 MEMBERS OF THE SED POLITBURO PARTICIPATED IN WREATH LAYING CEREMONIES AT THE GRAVES OF THESE "MURDERED" SOLDIERS.

3. SED SECRETARY GENERAL ERICH HONECKER AND MOST OF THE SED POLITBURO PRESIDED OVER THE ONE HOUR AUGUST 13 PARADE ON KARL MARX ALLEE IN EAST BERLIN, JOINED ON THE VIEWING STAND BY SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO THE GDR PYOTR ABRASSIMOV AND BORIS SNETKOV, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE SOVIET FORCES IN GERMANY. FOLLOWING A SPEECH BY POLITBURO MEMBER KONRAD NAUMANN (SEE PARA. 6) THE COMMANDER OF THE PARADING PARAMILITARY TROOPS REPORTED TO HONECKER WITH THE SLOGAN FOR THE DAY: "UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE SED, FIRMLY ALLIED WITH THE SOVIET UNION, FOR THE SURE DEFENSE OF OUR WORKER AND PEASANT STATE, THE GDR." A SMALL HONOR GUARD OF GDR BORDER TROOPS AND A CONTINGENT OF GDR PEOPLES POLICE LED OFF THE PARADE ONCE THE 8,500 PARAMILITARY TROOPS ASSEMBLED ON KARL MARX ALLEE HAD BEEN PRESENTED WITH ROSES BY 1,500 YOUNG ERNEST THAELMANN PIONEERS. THE PARAMILITARY MARCHERS WERE A MIXED GROUP REPRESENTING ORGANIZATIONS RANGING FROM GDR AIRLINE INTERFLUG UNITS TO ONE FROM THE GDR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. MANY OF THE MILITARY MARCHERS APPEARED WELL OVER 50 AND THEIR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BERLIN 06491 170857Z

FORMATIONS, COMPARED TO THE ARMY AND POLICE UNITS, APPEARED UNREGIMENTED AND LESS FIT. AFTER 30 MINUTES, THE PARADE ENDED WITH A FEW TROOP CARRIERS, DRAWING ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND ANTI-TANK WEAPONS WHICH WERE USED THE NEXT DAY IN THE "SPARTAKIAD" PARAMILITARY EXERCISES.

4. DESPITE PERFECT WEATHER AND CALLS IN THE GDR MEDIA FOR A LARGE PUBLIC TURNOUT, THE CROWD ALONG KARL MARX

ALLEE, OPTIMISTICALLY ESTIMATED AT 10,000 BY GDR COMMENTATORS, APPEARED SMZLL COMPARED TO OTHER PARADES IN EAST BERLIN. A MUTED ATMOSPHERE PREVAILED. INDEED, THE CROWD SEEMED LARGER AND MORE ANIMATED IN THE ALEXANDERPLATZ SUBWAY STATION JUST 100 YARDS FROM THE PARADE SITE WHERE EAST BERLINERS RUSHED FOR THE SUBWAY HOME AFTER COMPLETING THEIR FRIDAY AFTERNOON SHOPPING.

5. THE GDR'S RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE BERLIN WALL AND THE DEMONSTRATION TO COMMEMORATE ITS 15 ANNIVERSARY, APPEAR IN THE AUGUST 13 EDITION OF NEUES DEUTSCHLAND. IN A LONG, SELF-SERVING EDITORIAL IN WHICH THE "ACTION OF AUGUST 13" IS EUPHEMISTICALLY USED THROUGHOUT TO MEAN THE WALL, GDR AUTHORITIES CLAIM THAT THE "ACTION" OF 1961 HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE IN CENTRAL EUROPE FROM CONFRONTATION TO PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE. THE EDITORIAL BOASTS THAT THE ERA OF DETENTE, RECENTLY REFLECTED IN THE HELSINKI CONFERENCE, WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE "ACTION OF AUGUST 13". IT ALSO DESCRIBES THE "ACTION" AS A PRECONDITION TO THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, INCLUDING THE 1971 FOUR POWER AGREEMENT ON BERLIN, AND TO THE RECOGNITION OF THE GDR AS A SOVEREIGN STATE WITH "INVIOABLE" BORDERS. THE EDITORIAL ALSO ARGUES THAT THE "ACTION OF AUGUST 13" ENABLED THE GDR TO DEVELOP ITS ECONOMY FREE FROM THE "PLUNDERING" OF ITS RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY ITS WORKING FORCE, FROM THE "O. THE STRONGEST WORDS IN THE EDITORIAL ARE RESERVED FOR "REVANCHIST" CIRCLES IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC WHICH CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO RECOGNIZE THE BOUNDARIES OF THE GDR AND WHICH INCITE HARASSMENT OF THE GDR BORDER IN CONTRAVENTION OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 BERLIN 06491 170857Z

FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI AND THE MUTUAL ACCEPTANCE OF BOTH GERMAN STATES INTO THE UNITED NATIONS. THE EDITORIAL EMPHATICALLY CONCLUDES THAT THE GDR, RELYING IN THE FIRST INSTANCE UPON ITS OWN ARMY, POLICE AND MILITARY, WILL CONTINUE TO REPULSE ANY THREAT OF WHATEVER KIND TO ITS BORDER WITH THE FRG. IN THE BACKGROUND AND SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED IS THE SUPPORT OF THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER WARSAW PACT MEMBERS WHO WITH THE GDR, "PLANNED, COORDINATED AND CARRIED OUT" THE "ACTION OF AUGUST 13", ACCORDING TO THE EDITORIAL.

6. THE SPEECH BY BERLIN SED FIRST SECRETARY KONRAD NAUMANN AT THE DEMONSTRATION CARRIED SOME OF THE SAME THEMES AS THE EDITORIAL, PARTICULARLY THE READINESS AND ABILITY OF THE GDR TO DEFEND ITS BORDERS. IN A CLEAR

MESSAGE TO THE CROWD, HOWEVER, NAUMANN GAVE EQUAL EMPHASIS TO THE ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE GDR SINCE AUGUST 13, 1961 AND SAID THAT THE NEED TO DEFEND THESE ACCOMPLISHMENTS IS GREATER TODAY THAN IN 1961. HE ESPECIALLY LAUDED THE SOCIAL PROGRESS MADE IN THE GDR SINCE THE EIGHTH SED PARTY CONGRESS IN 1971. AT THE SAME TIME, HE PRAISED THE MILITIA, AND OTHER GDR ARMED FORCES WHO ALONG WITH THE ARMY OF THE SOVIET UNION, HAVE SHOWN "AGGRESSIVE GERMAN IMPERIALISM" THE LIMIT OF ITS POWER. NAUMANN REITERATED THE WARNING THAT REACTIONARY FORCES IN THE FRG MUST ACCEPT THE "REALITIES" OF THE CENTRAL EUROPEAN SITUATION AND NOT BE MISLED BY "ILLUSIONS". HE ALSO HOWEVER REPEATED THE MESSAGE IN THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE AUGUST 9TH EDITORIAL BY STATING THAT THE GDR WANTS "GOOD-NEIGHBORLY" RELATIONS WITH THE FRG BASED UPON MUTUAL RESPECT. POLANSKY

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